

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 OMB-01 CU-02 AF-06 LAB-04 SIL-01 BIB-01

EB-07 /080 W

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P R 221716Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1500

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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS USIA/IWE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, PINT, PO

SUBJ: LABOR LAW PROVOKES REACTION AT STATE TV

REF: LISBON 5381

SUMMARY: TELEVISION TREATMENT OF UNITARY LABOR LAW HAS SPARKED ACCUSATIONS THAT LEFT (READ PCP) HAS MONOPOLY ON TV PROGRAMMING. DEFENSIVE REPLY BY PRESIDENT OF PORTUGUESE STATE TELEVISION MAY BE ANOTHER INDICATOR OF ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT UNEASINESS OVER CONTROVERSIAL LABOR LAW. END SUMMARY.

1. PORTUGUESE STATE TELEVISION (RTP) ISSUED PRESS COMMUNIQUE JAN. 21 DEFENDING SELF AGAINST CHARGES THAT LEFT (READ PCP) HAS MONOPOLY ON TELEVISION PROGRAMMING. COMMUNIQUE ALSO READ ON EVENING NEWSCAST BY PRESIDENT OF RTP, MAJOR ANTONIO EANES, REPORTED TO BE MEMBER OF ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT.

2. STATEMENT CHARGED LEFT WITH VIOLATING INDEPENDENCE AND FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION ON TV BY POLITICAL INTERFERENCE
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AND PRESSURE STEMMING FROM WITHIN, AS WELL AS OUTSIDE,

TELEVISION STATION. "IF THERE HAS BEEN FAVORITISM SHOWN BY THE TELEVISION STATION, IT HAS BEEN FAVORITISM THAT HAS BENEFITED LEFT. BUT LEFT, NOT CONTENT WITH BENEFITS OF "EXCESS OF PROGRESSIVE ZEAL," HAS SOUGHT ABSOLUTE MONOPOLY ON TELEVISION PROGRAMMING."

3. TV DEBATE ON CONTROVERSIAL LABOR LAW HAD BEEN SCHEDULED FOR EVENING OF JAN. 21. IT WAS CANCELLED SAME DAY BY PRIME MINISTER. SUPPORTERS OF LAW (COMMUNISTS, SECRETARY OF LABRR, INTERSINDICAL) REFUSED TO DEBATE WITH POPULAR DEMOCRATIC (PPD) AND SOCIALIST OPPONENTS (LISBON 378).

4. RTP COMMUNIQUE WAS ALSO DESIGNED TO RESPOND TO ACCUSATIONS BY SOCIALIST MINISTER OF JUSTIC SALGADO ZENHA AND HIS SOCIALIST PARTY WHO, IN SEPARATE STATEMENTS, CHARGED THAT THEIR VIEWS ON LABOR LAW WERE NOT BEING REPORTED UNCENSORED BY TV.

5. ZENHA GAVE AIRPORT INTERVIEW JAN. 15 FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO LISBON FROM TRIP TO GERMANY. ZENHA CLAIMED INTERVIEW INCLUDED QUESTIONS ON LABOR LAW, DIVORCE, AND "SANEAMENTO" (POLITICAL PURGE). ALTHOUGH PRESS REPORTED INTERVIEW FULLY, ZENHA COMPLAINED JAN. 20 IN LETTER TO MINISTER OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS THAT TV CARRIED ONLY "BANAL" SEGMENTS OF INTERVIEW. ZENHA SAID FACT THAT GOVERNMENT MINISTER IS SUBJECTED TO CENSORSHIP DEMONSTRATES PARTIALITY OF RTP. LAME REPLY FROM MINISTRY OF MASS COMMUNICATIONS WAS THAT ZENHA'S REMARKS WERE CUT BECAUSE AIR TIME IS EXPENSIVE AND BECAUSE ZENHA WAS SPEAKING AS MEMBER OF SOCIALIST PARTY, NOT AS MINISTER OF GOVERNMENT.

6. SOCIALIST PARTY ISSUED PRESS COMMUNIQUE JAN. 18 ENTITLED "NO TO CENSORSHIP*" ISSUE AGAIN WAS FAIR TREATMENT OF PS STAND ON UNITARY LABOR LAW. PS COMMUNIQUE SAID "FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IS AGAIN BEING GAGGED," AND EXPLICITLY CHARGED PRIVATELY OWNED (AND PCP-ORIENTED) RADIO CLUBE PORTUGUES WITH "POISONING PUBLIC OPINION WITH CONTINUES DOSES OF PROPAGANDA."

7. COMMENT: STRUGGLE FOR CONTROL OF PROGRAMMING AT RTP (REFTEL) CONTINUES. RTP'S INFORMATION DEPARTMENT, WHICH HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR NEWS PROGRAMMING, IS NOW IN HANDS OF SOCIALISTS AND PPD. THEY HAVE EANES' BACKING ON CENSORSHIP ISSUE. CULTURAL PROGRAMMING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IS REPORTEDLY IN HANDS OF LEFTISTS FROM PCP.

8. EANES REPORTS DIRECTLY TO PRIME MINISTER. PRIME MINISTER SUPPORTED LABOR LAW. POSITIONS INIMICAL TO PASSAGE OF LABOR LAW GENERALLY WERE NOT REPORTED BY TV PRIOR TO ITS PASSAGE. NOW RTP IS BLAMING "EXTREME LEFTISTS" FOR TRYING TO MONOPOLIZE TELEVISION STATION. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER RTP CAN HAVE ITS CAKE AND EAT IT TOO. MORNING PRESS JAN. 22 QUOTES SECRETARY

OF STATE FOR MASS COMMUNICATIONS CONCEICAO E SILVA AS SAYING
THAT RTP HAS DIFFICULTIES BUT THEY WILL SOON BE SOLVED. THIS
SUGGESTS SHAKEUP WITH SOME PEOPLE BEING LET GO. WHO STAYS
WILL BE IMPORTANT.
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Message Attributes

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